Edited by
E. Haldeman-Julius
B-559

SEX AND SMELL

A STUDY OF SEXUAL OSPHRESIOLOGY, OR THE PART PLAYED BY ODORS IN SEXUAL ATTRACTION AND STIMULATION

By A. F. NIEMOELLER

SEX AND SMELL

A STUDY OF SEXUAL OSPHRESIOLOGY, OR THE PART PLAYED BY ODORS IN SEXUAL ATTRACTION AND STIMULATION

By A. F. NIEMOELLER

HALDEMAN-JULIUS PUBLICATIONS
GIRARD, KANSAS

Copyright, 1947,
By E. Haldeman-Julius

Printed in United States of America

INTRODUCTION

Among most civilized peoples smell in general, save for a few accepted elegant odors as those of expensive perfumes, delicate flowers, and appetizing foods, is a thing at which the elite nose is to be turned up. This elevation of the olfactory organ is not only literal in the case of any scent deemed offensive or even unrefined, but it also is figurative to perhaps an even greater degree at the suggestion that smells and the sense of smell have played, and still do play, a highly important part in our lives, development, and functions, and in particular in our sexual functions. Many a fine lady who is growing ever vainer over the number of men who are paying their addresses to her and who complacently attributes it to her own beauty, charm, "personality," and couture, would be more than indignant were it intimated that her peculiarly individual body odor might be a more powerful factor in her fatal attraction than all those other items put together. Blatant advertising of cosmetic and soap manufacturers (or rather of the opportunistic advertising agencies engaged by them) has pretty thoroughly convinced the general public, and in especial the female public, that "body odor" is such a detestable, repulsive, and inexcusable blight that it may well forever ruin one's business, social, and love lives, separately or collectively. Now what these charlatans refer to as "body odor" (which is so fearsome a thing that it must be glossed over as "B.O.") is really nothing of the sort at all, but rather is, on the whole, the scent emanating from the stale, sour, and rancid sweaty, oily, and other skin excretions that gather on the body, in hair, and above all in the clothing. Many a person sheds most of his B.O. along with his clothes, and so far as personal sweetening up is concerned a little "Duz could do it" in the laundry tub far better than an expensive deodorant in the axillae. What usually passes for B.O. is often actually the body odor of yesterday (or frequently of yester-week, or even yester-year) retained and altered for the worse for today.

As a mattr of fact, though it may be altered or inhibited by means which often are none too healthful for the skin or system, or it may be temporarily covered by drowning it in a flood of extraneous scent, true body odor cannot be destroyed. It is the result of a number of factors, among which racial and familiar heredity and individual personal peculiarities stand out, but it is there and it is as much a characteristic of a person as his pigmentation or the color of his eyes and hair. It is not, as "refined" folk airily imply, simply the result of slovenliness in personal hygiene. A healthy, normal Negro may step from a thorough scrubbing in a hot bath and by the time he has dried his skin his natural racial odor will be perceptible, and this is equally true of a white person, though in a lesser degree which is the consequence only of his racial background and not of any superior personal care of his body. Indeed, were it not for these characteristic body odors it is extremely doubtful that man or animals would have achieved anything like their present degree of evolution and development, so powerful is the part of smell in sexual selection and stimulation. Naive girls eagerly buy the highly self-touted commercial deodorants in the pious belief that they will facilitate the capture of an eligible man by destroying or preventing body odor and thus rendering them "dainty and kissable" (to quote from the nauseous ads), whereas the truth is that did these preparations actually destroy their body odor it would be a great disservice to the mating instinct which is much impelled and controlled by this odor. But body odor is but one of the elements (though a large one) in the story

of the relationship between sex and smell, and we shall go into it a bit more thoroughly farther along in its proper place..

It is a common mistake to think of physical love and sexual gratification as primarily arising in the genitalia and there being satisfied through coition. This is a most superficial and unthinking viewpoint which even a moderate amount of observation and self-examination will disprove, and if it should be true of any persons they would be found to be incomplete human beings. In order to be complete and wholesome, sexual pleasure requires that each sense enter into it, contribute its part, and derive its proper portion of gratification from it. Most people will admit that perhaps sight and touch may play some part in sexual reaction, but will hesitate to concede that taste may be equally important and smell perhaps even more so. So keen an observer of human affairs and motives as Shakespeare put the attraction of odor on a par with that of sight, and the French authority Cadet-Devaux, writing in the "Revue Encyclopedic," states that he considers the odorous emanations of the female the most important sexual attraction. And our own Oliver Wendell Holmes has voiced the opinion that physical and intellectual qualities do not exercise a greater influence on sex-affinity than those felt through the organs of smell.

One reason for the overlooking of the importance of smell in sex is the fact that the average modern human nose is not considered especially keen—certainly nothing to compare with that of a male dog who can scent a bitch in heat a mile off. There are some savages whose widely opened and sensitive nostrils enable them to detect enemies and even to track down game. Fournier, in the "Dictionnaire des sciences medicales," refers to a French woman living at Naples who had such an acute sense of smell that even slight odors were often intolerable to her and that sometimes she could not endure to be near certain persons. From a large group of women she could immediately pick out those who were menstruating. So hypersensitive was her sense of smell that she could not bear to sleep in a bed that had been made by someone else, and because of this she was at last forced to dismiss her maid and take care of her bedchamber herself. Fournier also mentions a young man who by smell alone could recognize his wife from other persons, and when in the army he could smell out the enemy like a dog. This last is especially credible in view of the tales told by many of the soldiers and marines who returned from duty in the Pacific during World War II: they said that in advancing through the jungle they took care when possible to proceed up-wind so as not to be spotted by Japanese snipers for, they said, they could often detect the presence of these snipers at a distance of up to 100 yards by a characteristic fishy odor which they attributed to the preponderance of fish in the diet of the Jap soldiers. There is a tale given in the Parisian *Journal des Savans* of 1864 about a Hungarian monk who claimed to be able to tell whether a woman was chaste or not simply by her odor. Dr. Monin in his book, "Les odeurs du corps humain" (Odors of the Human Body), refers to a certain women's specialist "who can admirably detect by smell, and without ever making a mistake, when any of his clients have their menstrual periods." It is said that the elder Baruel could invariably distinguish between samples of men's blood and women's blood by smell alone. And many more such outstanding examples could be multiplied would it serve any purpose, but we have enough here to indicate how keen and discriminating the olfactory sense may consciously be, and to imply how far-reaching and profound its unconscious effects may in general be.

The association of scent and sex may be traced back to the dawn of recorded history, and how much farther it recedes into the dim past is a conjecture, but it is more than probable that it extends back to the origin of man in view of the powerful factor it is in the sex life of the lower animals and the anthropoid apes whose instincts undoubtedly approximate those of emergent man.

Possibly the most ancient and certainly the most perfervid bit of erotic writing occurs in the Old Testament. It is known as the "Song of Solomon" and is redolent with odors, both symbolic and literal, as descriptive of the fascinating charms of the beloved and as used to enhance the ecstasy of the love meeting of the couple. The girl insists that "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." She further declares that her beloved has cheeks which "*are* as a bed of spices; his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh." Even the intentions of this biblical love-sick girl are aromatic: "A bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts. My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of camphire." Of herself she modestly asserts: "I *am* the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valley." And perfumes were evidently present in profusion for when she arose to let her beloved in the door her "hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock." Luxury and love seem ever to have been intimately associated with perfume and sweet scents, and to the fact that to this ancient Hebrew life was no exception the Bible bears ample witness in many places.

The ancient Greeks, with whom the refinements of love were a fine art, were by no means unaware of the close connections between sex and smell, as is amply borne out by numerous passages in such of their literature as has come down to us. Aristophanes in his "Lysistrata" makes some pointed references to sexual smells. And Philostratus, in the 18th of his collection of "Epistles," writes in warm terms to a boy to request him to return after a while some roses that he had sent him to be scattered over his bed, "since they then will have, not only the smell of the roses, but also the fragrance of your body." In ancient, luxury-loving Rome the extent to which the generality of the people came to indulge in bathing for eliminating objectionable odors (along with other purposes) and employed perfumes and ointments for substituting agreeable ones, at last attained almost the magnitude of a national scandal.

The pages of history are crowded with allusions to persons who were remarkable for the odors exhaled by their bodies, both on the agreeable and disagreeable side. Plutarch, in his "Convivalium Disputationum," records that Alexander the Great's body gave off a distinct scent similar to that of violets and that the garments he wore next to his skin were always redolent with this natural perfume. Martial goes into some detail on the excessively repulsive odor of the courtesan Thais and the inadequacy of the means she tried to combat it. Some persons give off a strong, penetrating sulphurous odor, and Schmidt tells of a 23-year-old journeyman saddler whose hands emanated a smell of sulphur so powerful as to fill a room with it in a short while. Rayer reports the case of a valet-de-chambre who consulted him because he could never hold a place long as a result of the odor he left behind him in any room where he had been working. Holy people of previous years were especially noted for their well-defined scent, the much referred to "odor of sanctity," which Hammond, however, attributes more to abnormal emotional and nervous states, constant association with incenses, and a confirmed neglect of washing than to any especial degree of sanctity. It is said that when the blessed Venturni of Bergamons was officiating at the altar the people would strive to get as close as possible to him in order to enjoy the delicious odor he exhaled; and that after St. Francis de Paul had subjected himself to a lengthy period of disciplinary inflictions and fasting, he gave off a most noticeable and pleasant odor. Not a few of these "human flowers," as Goethe termed them, emitted a distinct and pleasant odor of musk, some of them to such a degree as to have been made a matter of record, as in the case of Malherbe, Cujas, Haller, and some others. Our own Walt Whitman was noted for his attractive scent, and it is to be wondered if much of his power over the ladies did not stem as much from this as from the vigor and earthiness of his poetry.

One fact stands out: be it agreeable or disagreeable, attractive or repulsive, everyone has a more or less distinctive, personal odor about him, and it shall be our business in this paper to examine its various aspects in relation to sex.

SEX AND SMELL IN ANIMALS

It is fairly well known generally just what an important role smell and the sense of smell plays in the sex life of animals. Althaus has gone into some detail to show to what extent animals of opposite sex are attracted to each other through their olfactory sensations, and he points out that with few, if any, exceptions they give out at the time of their rutting (the season in which they are strongly prompted to mating) a strong and characteristic scent from their genitalia, which odor not only is recognized by the other sex of that species at some distance, but also excites a strong sexual desire which in some instances almost approaches frenzy. The distance over which this influence is operative in some cases approaches proportions that are almost unbelievable. As has already been mentioned, it is not uncommon for a dog to sense it at a mile, and there are carefully observed cases on record where a male dog has been attracted to a bitch in heat (the canine equivalent of *rutting*) over a distance of several miles or more. That smell is no purely adventitious factor in the sex life of dogs, but is a basic necessity, was amply borne out by the experiments of Schiff who removed the olfactory nerves from a number of puppies and found that when they attained their growth the males were unable to distinguish the females from the other males and failed to react sexually to females in heat. Naturalists have often tried the experiment of carrying some virgin moths of the Bombyx species in boxes in their pockets and walking to the center of a large field where they were far from the natural cover of the insects, and before long there would be male moths of the same species fluttering about them, obviously as a result of the attractive odor of the females operating over a considerable distance. Not a few animals have special little glands in their genitals, often in the case of the male in the prepuce, whose function it is to produce these sexually attractive odoriferous substances, and some produce them in such profusion as to make feasible their collection for purposes of medicine and perfumery—as in the case of the highly prized musk which is obtained from preputial glands in the Thibetan musk-deer, or castor which is similarly got from the beaver.

In general among animals it is the female who exhales the specific sexually attractive odor when she is physiologically ready for coition, which Nature has arranged to coincide with the time in her cycle most propitious for procreation, and it is the male who reacts to it. Since human beings are also of the animal family it is only to be expected that they exhibit traits in common with them, and the human female gives off a characteristic odor around the time of her menstruation, that is in addition to her normal body odor, which undoubtedly in the dim history of mankind made an important factor in his mating habits and which is less important today only because of the sophisticated pressures of modern civilization and the blunting almost to the point of extinction of the acuity of the great majority of mankind's sense of smell. But the influence is still by no means gone, as we shall examine into a bit later on. Humankind, however, or at least the modern version of it, differs somewhat from the animals in that the female is frequently as much or even more moved by the odor of the male than the other way around.

An interesting example of the power that may be exerted by the sexual odors of animals not only in their own functions but in the course of world history, is furnished by the anecdote of how Darius came to be

king. When King Cyrus died he left no son to succeed him in his kingship, so the chiefs all got together and agreed that they would all ride out early and await the rising sun (taken as a god by the Persians) on a certain hill, and he whose horse should be the first to neigh in salute to the sun would become king. Darius' stable master learned of this agreement and decided to give fate a little help in making up its mind, so on the evening before the chiefs were to ride out to the agreed upon hill he took a mare in heat there, staked her out, returned to the stables, took the stallion which his master invariably rode, led it to the odoriferous mare, and let Nature take its course. When on the next morning the chiefs rode out to the hill as per arrangement, Darius' stallion sniffed about a bit, pawed the ground and, the ecstasies of the previous night all coming back to him, neighed lustily for the mare to come back for a repeat performance. While this was going on the sun came up and all the other chiefs dismounted and got down on their knees to hail the new king. It might be added in passing that more than one page of French history has been altered by a king's susceptibility to feminine scent, natural or artificial.

The power of smell in the sexual processes of animals is well demonstrated by the use cattle breeders make of it. Certain females, especially among cows, give great difficulty in getting them fecundated — the French call these "Robinieres." One of the chief causes of this difficulty is the revulsion the male will exhibit toward these particular females, though he will be quite virile and eager with the majority of females. This antipathy has been traced to the peculiar odor of these shunned females, and breeders have succeeded in hiding or altering this odor with other scents in such a way as to overcome temporarily the repugnance felt by the male and thus getting him to fecundate the female.

These persuasive scents may be either natural or artificial; that is, they may be from other females which are not repulsive to the male, or they may be from plants and herbs. Among these latter, breeders have found that with mares strong infusions of French honeysuckle, wild thyme, sage, and other aromatic herbs are effective. With cows infusions of various green herbs seem to function quite well; and with rabbits infusions of white nettle or of wild thyme are of service. These infusions are spread over the animal, particularly toward the buttocks, or shallow injections of weaker solutions are sometimes made into the genitalia in order to cover over or lessen the odors from the genital secretions which repel the male.

It is especially difficult in the breeding of mules to get the male to mate with a mare of a different species, and in these cases recourse is usually had to the natural odors of a female of his own species, preferably of a female which is a favorite of his. A customary procedure is to have the strange female stay in the same stable with and close to the favorite for several days beforehand so as to take on the odors not only of the favorite but of the familiar stable as well. Just before the time of connection some of the genital secretions of the favorite are removed and placed similarly on the stranger, the male is led in, often blindfolded so that his eyes cannot uncover the fraud that his nose abets, and the covering is allowed to proceed naturally. Sometimes, however, this is not sufficient to persuade the male and he still refuses to cooperate, in which event the stranger is removed, the favorite is brought in and the male is allowed to smell her until he has himself in a sufficiently aroused condition, after which the stranger is again brought into position and the action permitted to conclude.

Stock raisers say that if the olfactory sense of a stallion is affected or perverted to any considerable degree it may result in his losing as much as three-quarters of his vigor, and that if this sense of smell is entirely destroyed he is most likely to fall into a condition of relative or even complete impotence.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SMELL AND SEX

As has already been indicated, the part smell plays in sexual selection in man, that is the mechanism through which an individual selects this or that person of the opposite sex with which to satisfy his mating urge rather than merely haphazardly seizing upon the first that happens to offer, has been considerably lessened in modern civilization. It is not improbable that primitive man snuffed a suitable mate out from among the trees or rocks with as much vigor and enthusiasm as is yet today displayed by a dog in the same endeavor, with little regard for the other person's more extraneous qualities. It is difficult to say whether smell plays a lesser role in modern society because of a diminution of olfactory acuity, or if the blunting of the keenness of the sense of smell came about as a result of disuse through its reduced prominence in sexual selection in consequence of the gradual substitution by civilization of other less direct, more sophisticated, and more or less extraneous criteria and stimuli. An artificial social structure, a highly competitive economic system, and the development and pampering of rather a squeamish attitude toward the "animal" side of human life all have contributed to lessening the importance of smell in sexual selection. Many women who are today married because of their family, social, or financial background, would have been promptly rejected on more fundamental physical or biological grounds had their mates been guided in their choice primarily by a primitive, unspoiled sense of smell. Also, present-day civilization makes it impossible for even an acute sense of smell to function properly in this connection, for that squeamishness which we have just mentioned prompts many persons to feel ashamed of and attempt to hide or disguise their natural, normal body odor with any of a great variety of factitious scents. Not that artificial scents cannot be sexually attractive, as we shall see later when we study perfumes, but in most cases they are chosen so ineptly as to defeat their purpose by repelling rather than attracting.

However, this is all merely a matter of the status quo; actually it has been shown that latent in the structure of our olfactory system there lies all the potentialities of sexual appeal through smell, and should conditions ever alter so as to warrant or make it desirable there is little doubt but that man's sexual responses would after a time again become conditioned to odorous stimuli. Indeed, there are some unusual or abnormal persons in which such a condition persists, some cases of which have been quoted previously. Neurasthenic persons, hypersensitive artists, perverts, and similar persons whose psyche is not chained and governed by the usual inhibitions are frequently highly susceptible and reactive to olfactory perception, thus demonstrating that the mechanism for delicate response to impressions of smell is still there if only we can discover how to use it.

Though considerably reduced, the sexual influences of smell are still no negligible factor among civilized people, even those who are psychically normal. The chief differences between primitive man and modern man in this connection are that in the latter the reactions are less pronounced as a rule and operate only over short distances, often only upon close personal proximity. Of course, there is to be found considerable difference between various individuals on this score. Some there are in whom the olfactory element may be the deciding factor in sexual attraction or repulsion; others there are for whom smell may be only

a contributory factor, an additional influence that enters to render an already attractive person of the opposite sex either a little more or a little less appealing; whilst there are still others upon whom personal odors appear to exert no ascertainable effect one way or the other, unless perhaps they happen to be extraordinarily pronounced. It seems likely that the major portion of the cultured persons of today would fall into the middle category.

An interesting and curious manifestation of the sexual power of smell is to be found in the ancient custom of the olfactory kiss, sometimes called the "smell-kiss." In this, instead of the labial contact of the usual kiss, the nose of each of the kissers is placed alongside the cheek of the other and the odor of each other is inhaled. The nose-rubbing salute of the Eskimos is a variation of this same thing. We of the Western World complacently think of our labial kiss as the only genuine article and like to regard the other as something of a perversity of "a few ignorant savages." The truth is that our labial kiss is the upstart and newcomer on the scene. The general introduction of the lip kiss seems to be of European origin, and the ancients rarely refer to it. Throughout the Orient, and particularly among the Mongol and Indian races, the olfactory kiss predominates, and over a large portion of the globe it is the accepted form of salutation between friends and lovers. Indeed, there are races of people who instead of saying as we would, "Give me a kiss," say "Smell me." Incidentally, our labial kiss simply substitutes one sense for another, that of taste for smell, but taste plays and has played a much less profound part in sex than the other.

Smell is undoubtedly the most intimate of all our senses. The rest of them play more or less over the surface of the object or person perceived, but it is given to smell alone in some degree to enter *into* the inner nature of that object, to sense and interpret its innate character. It is the only sense through which the psyche comes into direct contact with the perceived object, a condition that has led some to term smell the "sublimated thing-in-itself." In the words of Heinrich Steffens:

> "Smell is the principal sense of the higher animals; it represents for them their own inner world; it envelops their existence. Upon smell, wherein sympathy and antipathy are represented, is based the whole security of the higher animal instinct; for carnal desire is comprehended in this sense. . . . Indeed, in sexual union the subjective sensation which is developed by means of smell blends completely with the objective, and from the monistic union of the two arises the intenser libido, wherein the unfathomableness of the procreative force and the whole power of sex are absorbed."

Ernst Haeckel, and after him Kroner, goes even farther and envisages the two sexual cells as possessing a sort of low-grade psychic activity which enables them to sense each other's proximity, and he feels that this sensitivity which draws them together is comparable to the sense of smell. The seat of this sensitivity he declares to be in the nuclei of the sexual cells, and he labels it "erotic chemotropism," and he holds it to be the psychical basis of sexual attraction and desire.

As has been mentioned, among animals sexual desire is periodic, and the chief control lies in the female. When she is in a condition proper for conception she not only feels intense desire for coition herself but her genitalia give off a strong odor (the rutting odor) which powerfully inclines toward copulation any male of the same species who smells it. The periodicity of desire, therefore, lies fundamentally in the female and is present in the male only insofar as it occurs in those stimulating odors reaching him. Among a number of females of various rutting periods the male would be aroused at harzard as he encountered this or that rutting female, but if restricted to a single female his periods of desire would conincide with hers.

There is little doubt that somewhere back in the evolutionary chain humankind also had its rutting season and the male's sexual activity was pretty well confined to those periods when the female gave off the stimulating odor. As with the animals, of course, this odor originated in glands in primitive woman's genitalia, and there are authorities who are convinced that the little glands known as the glands of Bartholin which are found in the genital organs of present-day woman are nothing more than the vestige remaining from the odoriferous glands which functioned so importantly when primitive woman was subject to rutting periods. Today, in general, such odor as exhales from these Bartholin glands is largely only contributory to sexual excitement in the male, the stimulating emanation now seeming to rise pretty much from the entire surface of the female body. There are men, however, who experience intense gratification simply from inhaling the smell from female genitals. Some Oriental peoples have gone even farther and have worked out an entire system of classification of their women based on the type of odor given off by their genitals.

Distinction must be made, of course, between the normal, fresh odor arising from the female genitalia which are given their proper hygienic care, and that emanating from the stale secretions accumulated in and around the neglected vulva of an unfastidious woman. These old secretions soon alter and the scent they give off will almost invariably be repellent rather than attractive to the normal male—it is only an occasionally pervert who may find these unwholesome smells stimulating. Continued neglect can render such odors almost overpowering, and to this may be attributed much of the great popularity of perfumes in the "elegant" court of Louis XIV and neighboring times, when superficial finery and tinsel covered over a personal filthiness of the quality folk almost beyond comprehension; indeed, the unbathed fine ladies of this period openly and complacently boasted of the number of years that had passed since last they had washed their private parts, holding that it was only women of immoral lives or downright prostitutes who found it necessary to do such an "unnatural" thing. So valid is the hygienic factor in this matter that it may be noted even amongst animals, and it has been affirmed through careful observation that females who fail to keep themselves clean by licking during heat will find few males who care to join with them, saving only as a rule some males whose olfactory sense has in some manner become impaired or inverted, just as may, and does, happen with human beings.

The functioning of the sex-stimulating odor of women is such that not infrequently it operates to augment itself. Certain especially passionate women have been found who, under masculine provocation, will undergo an almost instantaneous increase in body temperature of from 1.8 degrees to as much as 3.6 degrees F. This temperature increase naturally augments the odorous emanations from her body, and her greatly heightened emotional tension will tend to promote accelerated secretion of her odoriferous glands, all of which will work to stimulate the male to a yet greater degree.

This erotogenic odor of women is not, naturally, a constant thing for all individuals: its quality, amount, and potency are as much elements of an individual woman's personality as are, say, the color, amount, and texture of her hair. It is on this basis that may be explained the great success of certain rather plain women with the "gorgeous hunks of men" whom all women pursue whilst their far more beautiful and shapely sisters stand around relatively ignored. It is not unusual for some of these by-passed beauties impatiently to demand: "Now, what's she got that I haven't got," and it is amusing to envision what would be their utter amazement if some honest and informed person would step up and tell them simply: "The right smell." As has been hinted at earlier, hiding or altering the natural body odor has in

all probability ruined more romances for women than it has made, popular advertising to the contrary.

When people think at all about sex and smell they usually think of it from the standpoint of emanating from the woman and affecting the man. This has probably been quite true in the past of evolution, but there is every reason to believe that it is not so one-sided with modern humankind. Though in different manners and to different degrees, many women of today are affected sexually by male odors just as profoundly as the other way around. The 18th century agitator, Wilkes, who was renowned as one of the ugliest men of his time, habitually boasted that if he were given an hour's start with a beautiful woman he would without fear of defeat compete with the handsomest of men for her favors, and it is said that on many occasions he made good his boast. His success was commonly attributed to his brilliant conversational powers, but more astute persons are inclined to find its basis in a personal odor he probably possessed which was peculiarly compelling to women. And 19th century Paris was all agog with the choice scandal of the Princess de Chimay (a Miss Clara Ward before she made the right marriage) who shamelessly chased around after a poor, uneducated, and rather uncouth gypsy violinist from a Parisian cafe; and here again it was obviously a case of a woman meeting a man whose personal odor she simply could not resist regardless of how many other good reasons there might be against such a connection.

Naturally, such extreme instances are the exception and as a rule with present-day women, as with men, the excitation of the smell of the opposite sex is contributory rather than fundamental in the arousing of the libido; but on the whole it is still far from a negligible factor, and the fact that many women will hotly deny its influence is due far more to its operating on them without their awareness of it than to its nonexistence.

It stands to reason, and is borne out by experience, that there is an intrinsic difference between the nature or quality of the male and female odors. It has already been pointed out that with women normally the chief seat of sexual odor is the genitals, and to this the rest of the body may contribute in varying degrees; whereas with men the scent arises primarily from the body as a whole, and this may be added to some extent by the genitals. Of course, with either sex there is always the possible added element of "associated scents" which are extraneous, non-body odors (as a certain perfume with a woman or a tobacco with a man) which by always being present on a beloved person eventually through association or conditioning come to wield upon the other of a couple a stimulating power comparable to that of the erotogenic smell itself, and in certain cases even greater. There are women who find themselves definitely moved by this general male scent, but to whom the specific odor of the male genitalia is not attractive or even repellent —"fishy," as some disgustedly describe it.

The odorous emanations from a healthy, robust, well-functioning male body seems to exert the greatest effect upon the majority of normal women. The exigencies of civilized, urban living much affect and disturb the wholesomeness and processes of the body, which in turn soon vitiates the purity of its odor, and this has probably been no small factor in the decline of the importance of smell in sex in modern times. More than one woman has waxed ecstatic over the "perfume" of some bronzed, lean peasant lad who works hard all day in wind-swept fields under the purifying sun, without quite realizing the implications of her reactions. In this connection it is to the point, we feel, to duplicate the lyrical description of this intoxicating aroma as given by a female correspondent of Havelock Ellis:

> "One predominant attraction of these men (peasants) is that they are pure and clean; their bodies in a state of healthy normal

function. . . . This 'natural fair perfume of the flesh' is a peculiar attribute of young men who live in the open air and deal with natural objects. Even their perspiration has an odor different from that of girls in ballrooms: more refined, ethereal, pervasive, delicate, and difficult to seize. When they have handled hay—in the time of hay-harvest, or in winter, when they bring hay down from mountain huts—the youthful peasants carry about with them the smell of 'a field the Lord hath blesed.' Their bodies and their clothes exhale an indefinable fragrance of purity and sex combined. Every gland of the robust frame seems to have accumulated scent from herbs and grasses, which slowly exudes from the cool, fresh skin of the lad. You do not perceive it in a room. You must take the young man's hands and bury your face in them, or be covered with him under the same blanket in one bed, to feel this aroma. No sensual impression on the nerves of smell is more poignantly impregnated with spiritual poetry—the poetry of adolescence, and early hours upon the hills, and labor cheerfully accomplished, and the harvest of God's gifts to man brought home by human industry."

The point of quoting the above is to illustrate that it is every bit as possible for a woman to wax as poetically ecstatic over the smell of a man, as it is for a man to wallow in lyrical transports over a woman's more conventional allurements, as her fair hair, blue eyes, or tiny foot.

Often the most enlightening and convincing proofs of the validity of sexual truths are to be found in their contraries, and to this smell is no exception. However real may be the influence of smell in the normal man's sex life, it is of even more importance with inverts or homosexuals, male and female. However, as might logically be expected, the male invert as a rule finds the normal female odor either unattractive or downright repulsive, whereas the normal male odor will move him strongly. The authority Raffalovich cites many instances of this, and he also advances the theory that as the body odor of a man undergoes a marked increase under sexual excitement, which is an established fact borne out by the experience of many, this heightened odor may work upon the man himself further to stimulate him and thus establish a cycle of self-augmenting desire. Also, male inverts find the odor of peasants and open air workers especially attractive to an equal or even greater degree than normal women.

This is all equally true of female inverts, though naturally in their case it is the odor of other women rather than of men that is alluring. The effect of smells on these persons is probably multiplied because not only are they as a rule less inhibited in their reactions than the average "normal" person, but in addition they not infrequently possess a hypersensitive olfactory sense. It seems safe to assert that there are few if any inverted women who are not influenced to a discernible extent by the fragrance of their beloved, and in many cases it is quite exaggerated, as for example the invert who is recorded as having requested of her "sweetheart" some of her hair so that she might in solitude intoxicate herself with its perfume.

In studying the place of smell in the sexual functions, it may be well to examine a bit into the relationship between the organ of smell, the nose, and the organs of sex, and their physiological connections.

The nose, that is its outward characteristics and in particular its size and to a somewhat lesser degree its shape and placement, has from remote antiquity been taken by a great many peoples as rather a direct and dependable index of either the size of the sexual organ or of sexual vigor, or of both. Particularly in men a large nose has long been popularly presumed to be indicative of a large virile member. The ancient Romans were well convinced of this, and it is an odd coincidence that the old Roman poet who is undoubtedly the outstanding singer of the

beauties, problems, and techniques of love, Ovid, had as part of his name the word *Naso,* which is the Latin for *nose* and which was accorded his family by reason of the dominant olfactory organ that adorned the males of the line. To this day the average Italian believes in the correspondence of size of the two organs, and there are even several proverbs current in the country, especially around Venice, which are based upon this theory.

In women, a large nose is frequently taken as an indication of extreme sexual ardor, as it also is to some extent in men, since it is usually taken for granted that a large member signifies strong sexual vigor and appetite. This belief obtained even amongst so staid a people as the English, as is evidenced by a reference in a 16th century play by Massinger, "Emperor of the East":

> Her nose, which by its length assures me
> Of storms at midnight if I fail to pay her
> The tribute she expects.

Nor are more recent times, including even the present, free from this belief. The satiric and skeptical Schopenhauer states quite definitely: "The fate of innumerable girls has been decided by a slight upward or downward curve of the nose." And one of the famous wisecracks of history was made on this basis by Pascal when he observed that had Cleopatra's nose been but a trifle larger, the whole political geography of our globe might have taken a different course. To this day most phrenologists, fortune-tellers, and seers of all sorts utilize the external characteristics of their clients' noses in prognosticating in connection with their sex lives.

While many of the beliefs centering about this nose-sex relationship contain a goodly portion of outright superstition, there nevertheless appears to be some basis for them in physical and physiological fact. In most persons there actually is a notable increase in the size of the nasal septum during puberty, the time when the sex organs are developing into readiness to function. And there are other close connections between the olfactory and sexual regions which doctors have studied and the observation of which long ago by the common folk must have given rise to these various beliefs. Marro, who made detailed studies of a great number of criminals, found that there was no class of criminal in which there was so large a percentage of anomalies of both nasal and genital organs as in the sex criminal.

In all probability the physiological relationship between the nose and the sexual function is even closer than the physical, and this is true of both men and women. The main reactions from the sex processes seem to be upon the mucous membrane of the nose. Often this shows a remarkable sympathetic response to various sexual activities, and at other times the genital organs will appear to respond to olfactory functions or disorders. So well established is this correlation that it has been given a special name, the naso-genital reflex. Though operating in both sexes, it gives evidence of greater prevalence among women.

The symptoms often start early, usually with puberty when the sex glands are maturing. In addition to the increase in the nasal septum mentioned previously there is many times recurrent bleeding of the nose, not infrequently to a troublesome degree. In women this nose-bleeding is often noted at the time of menstruation, and in certain cases it may entirely replace menstruation, bleeding taking place from the nose only and not from the vulva, in which event it is termed "vicarious menstruation." Also, nose-bleed is far from uncommon during periods of sexual excitement, as during or after coition or masturbation. Indeed, there have been cases in which severe nose-bleed has been stopped or considerably lessened by applying ice to the genital region. Conversely, there have even been gynecologists who have attempted to treat pelvic disorders, and especially menstrual disfunctions, by cauterizing the

nasal mucous membrane, theorizing that a beneficial reflex could thus be induced in the pelvic organs. Congestion of the nasal mucosa is quite common during sexual tension, often accompanied by sneezing and more or less profuse mucous secretion, and the term "bride's cold" is popularly used to refer to this condition in a woman on her honeymoon, when naturally sexual excitement is usually maintained at rather a high pitch for some time. Dr. E. S. Talbot gives an interesting case that illustrates the close inter-relationship of nasal and genital areas. A 56-year-old man was operated on for the removal of the cartilage on the left side of the septum of the nose in order to correct a condition remaining from an accident to his nose in early life. The operation was done under a local anesthetic and no pain was felt save at one point of the lower rear portion near the floor of the nose, and as a result the patient underwent a severe shock of the general system. The reflex from this pain so influenced the sexual organs as to bring about a continuous flow of semen for three weeks. Treatment succeeded in checking this flow, but the patient suffered neurasthenia and general malaise and lassitude for months after. And we may find a final evidence of the bonds existing between the nose and the genitals in the fact that, just as in the young the maturing of the sexual organs is commonly accompanied by an increase in the acuity of the sense of smell, as if to augment this budding function; so in the old as the sexual powers fade out there is frequently a relatively sudden upsurge in the keenness of smell, as if nature wished to compensate for the waning of a function with a corresponding enhancing of an allied one. This same condition is often encountered in younger men who for one reason or another become impotent, and in them this exaggerated sharpness of smell may come to replace its correlated function, sex, and the result is olfactory fetishism, of which more later.

A closer and more careful study of the exact relation between the olfactory and sexual functions and their organs would doubtless be productive of a much deeper understanding of the fundamental nature of sex, the libido, and its points of contact with the other bodily functions and organs, but as yet such study has on the whole been rather superficial and poorly organized with all too little attempt properly to distinguish between the physiological and pathological relations between the nose and the sex organs.

SEX-STIMULATING ODORS

It goes almost without saying that in the matter of smells capable of arousing sexual reactions some aspect of the body odor of the opposite sex is fundamental. It follows with equal logic that where there is some sex-inciting scent of non-body origin it will as a rule obtain its validity through resemblance to or association with actual body odor. In other words, an artificial or extrinsic scent may prove stimulating simply because it happens to smell much like some element of the human body (as the odor of Spanish leather resembles that of a warm, moist human body, or the odor of moderately sauted mushrooms closely suggests that of fresh semen) or is made to smell like the human body, as in the case of carefully prepared perfumes. In addition there are smells which by all outward evidences bear no similarity to that of the body, and these are of two general sorts. There are certain perfumes and natural scents which, while bearing no obvious relation to body odor, yet appear to work as sex-excitants upon a goodly portion of normal people—and these we shall consider in more detail in a later chapter on perfumes. But when we come to abnormal persons, all rules are off and it is possible for almost any smell in the world, however far re-

moved from sex or body odors, to become associated for one reason or another in the mind of a particular individual with sexual reactions and thus become a potent stimulus toward those reactions—and this we shall consider in a chapter on smell fetishism. But in the present chapter we shall concern ourselves with those odors effecting a direct sexual stimulation, and in particular with the nature of the most basic of these: body odor.

Let us pause here to correct a widespread misconception under which the reader may also be laboring. The popular view of odor is that it is some wholly intangible and immaterial influence which in some manner affects the olfactory nerves, but that there is no real substance involved as there is, say, in tasting a delicious fruit or a spoiled meat; and in consequence there is a tendency to scoff at the possibility of smells effecting any physiological reaction, good or bad. The truth is that in many respects the sense of smell is pretty much an elaboration of the sense of taste and like it in general requires for its stimulation some material agent. Now scents, whether arising from a perfume, a dung-heap, or a human body, are material and consist of any of a great variety of real substances; only since they are as a rule in the form of a vapor (gaseous) or of infinitely finely divided particles of a solid or liquid, they cannot be perceived by the eye and are in consequence instinctively taken to be some sort of intangible force comparable to a radio wave. But smells are transmitted on a substantial basis, and these substances are absorbed through the nasal mucosa, enter into the physiology of the system, and there bring about certain reactions, the most obvious of which is olfaction. Sex stimulation is another of these reactions from certain of these scents, and it is no more remarkable than would be the reaction obtained from an aphrodisiac agent administered by mouth or through injection. Some authorities believe that we may even absorb the exhalations of other persons directly through the skin—indeed, this is one of the best explanations of that remarkable childbirth phenomenon known as the *couvade*. It is further quite conceivable that there are exhalations which stimulate no olfaction, but which nevertheless are absorbed into the body as are the odorous ones and there produce reactions whose causes are puzzling to deduce.

One of the most ancient employments of the beneficial effects of bodily exhalations is to be found in the biblical practice known as *Shunammitism*. The reference to this is to be found at I Kings, 1, v. 1-4, and reads as follows: "Now King David was old *and* stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be brought for my lord the king a young virgin; and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel *was* very fair, and cherihed the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not." The idea behind having this beautiful young virgin constantly around the old king, tending him and even sleeping in the same bed with him, was that the bodily emanations given off by the girl would be absorbed by the old fellow and work some degree of rejuvenation. There was no scarcity of women around David's household (he had at least seven wives that we know about), but a young virgin was chosen because it was believed that such a person abounded in the therapeutic exhalations they were after, and a beautiful virgin was picked because it was taken for granted that beauty denoted that state of perfect health necessary for the wholesomeness of her exhalations. It is also possible that aged David "gat some heat" through visual and tactual contacts with the fair young maid, as old Venette rather slyly hints.

But there is every reason to think that the belief in the therapeutic value of the bodily emanations of chaste, young, healthy persons long

antedated this biblical instance. There are certain magic formulae in ancient Egyptian manuscripts that seem to refer to it, and over 500 years ago an antiquarian by the name of Gommarus dug up a long-buried marble votive tablet bearing an inscription which freely translated read: "To Æsculapius and Sanitas, this table is erected by L. Clodius Hermippus, who lived 115 years and five days with the aid of exhalations of young girls; which circumstance caused physicians no little wonder even after his death. You, descendants, lead your life in the same way." Some have asserted this tablet to be an ancient hoax, but hoax or not it at least demonstrates the prevalency of the belief at the time. An old Italian physician of the Renaissance, one Marsilius Ficinus, adhered strongly to the theory and saw no reason that if the soulless emanations from plants could be productive of so much pleasure, why should not those from an animate young girl be even more beneficial. The sage Francis Bacon shared this opinion and believed in the existence of *vital spirits* which could pass from one body to another. In his "Silva Silvarum" he says: "The spirits of young people can, when they enter an older body, restore life to it, or at least keep it in good health for a long time thereafter. It has been observed that old men who spend much time in the company of youths live long, for their spirits emerge strengthened from such contacts. Thus the ancient rhetoricians and sophists were always to be found among youthful bearers, as witness, Georgias, Pythagoras and Isocrates, and grammarians like Orbilius, among others, who reached the century mark." Bacon even had a plan for increasing the rejuvenating effect of a "Shunammite" girl by anointing her with myrrh and other aromatic agents, not so as to enhance the pleasantness of her odor but to augment the warmth emanating from her body.

As for more recent times, in 18th century France, where men worked quite earnestly at exhausting themselves with all the pleasures of the flesh, Shunammitism was not infrequently resorted to in an attempt to restore vigor. An outstanding case in point was that of Claude Henri Fusee, Abbe de Voisenon, who was not only a prominent churchman but the author of some risque "Erotic Fairy Tales" as well, and in his spare moments he found time to be the lover of, among others, the actress Favart, Mlle. Quinault, and the renowned Madame du Chatelet. Growing old and a trifle frayed around the edges, he retired from active participation in the world and took into his home a Miss Huchon to act as a "Shunammite" toward him. According to reports, he refrained from all carnal contact with her, a circumstance which moved Querlon to conclude his account of this matter (in his book about Voisenon, "Exercises de Devotion") with the delightfully Gallic observation: "She was a girl of great beauty; she slept always beside him, and he left her always virgin. Ah!" Indeed, so common was this practice in the Paris of that period that there were procuresses who made a good business simply out of supplying girls for the purposes of Shunammitism.

But to get back to body odor itself and its more direct sex stimulation. An indication of the sex significance of body odor is the fact, which was even noted by Hippocrates, that it does not attain its characteristic quality and strength until puberty, when a person's sex life is beginning. The odor of an infant's body is quite different from that of an adult, and it has been claimed that there have been certain persons who could tell an individual's age by his odor.

At the onset of puberty a person's body odor begins to take on its adult quality, but it is not a constant thing from then on, but continues to undergo changes throughout life which are governed by age, health, manner of life, emotional states, and a number of lesser factors. Variation in body odor is easier to comprehend when it is seen that it is not, as might be thought, a single, general emanation from the body as a whole, but rather is a complex made up of a number of components each

of which is variable and consequently capable of affecting the nature of the whole. It is commonly considered that the general body odor is a combination from seven important contributing individual odors:

1. The general odor of the skin. (This is usually agreeable in a healthy person and is not, as is often presumed, the result of uncleanliness—it is often discernible even immediately after washing.)

2. The odor of the hair and scalp. (Hair, not only of the scalp, but of the pubis, axillae, and elsewhere as well, is an efficient retainer and accumulator of smells.)

3. The odor of the breath.

4. The odor of the armpits.

5. The odor of the feet.

6. The odor of the perineum.

7. The odor of the genitals. (In men this is largely the result of preputial smegma, a cheesy secretion which gathers under the foreskin near the base of the glans; and in women it is a composite arising from the mons veneris, a smegma secreted by the vulva, mucus from the vagina, products of menstruation, etc.)

There are, of course, other individual smells contributory to the body odor, but in a normal person none of them can compare in importance to the above.

In addition to the alteration of body odor through variation in any of the above factors making it up, there are a number of influences which tend to determine or modify it, and these we shall now consider briefly.

The elements of age, sex, one's manner of living, the climate in which one lives, even his occupation, have already been mentioned, but they must not be forgotten as important modifying influences on body odor. But what is possibly the most fundamental factor in the whole situation is race. While there are certain individual variations, there is on the whole a distinctive type of smell attaching to the majority of the members of any racial strain. Some of these have been rather carefully studied and analyzed. The average Negro normally has quite a decided ammoniacal odor which is not, as most white persons choose to believe, the result of personal dirtiness but rather, according to the investigations of Pruner-Bey, of a volatile oil liberated by the sebaceous glands in a Negro's skin. The Eskimos and Greenlanders are characterized by their oil scent, the product probably of their highly fatty diet. The average Chinese gives off a readily discernible musty odor; and the Cossacks are said to emanate such a pronounced horsey smell (possibly the consequences of their almost constant association with the animals) that it may be noted for some hours after a considerable number of them have passed through a locality. Care must always be exercised, however, to distinguish between true racial odor and that of the filth in which some peoples habitually live, as for example certain low-grade Indians.

There is some evidence that even complexion and general physical type may influence body odor. As far back as the 16th century Ambroise Pare noted that persons with red hair and a freckled complexion gave off an offensive emanation. Dark complexioned people are considered to exude a scent similar to that of prussic acid, whereas blond persons frequently smell like musk. It is not uncommon for fat people to disperse an oily scent.

Body odor is often notably altered by sexual intercourse, and in particular that portion of it residing in the breath. Back in 1877, Preismann made rather a careful study of this phenomenon and found that for six hours after coition a peculiar odor was discernible on the breath, which he attributed to a special secretion of the buccal glands. He found this odor to be most noticeable in men of about 35, and that it could be

detected at a distance even of from four to six feet. So convinced was he of the validity of this that he suggested it as a legal test for men accused of rape who had been arrested shortly after the alleged act. The post coitum odor of the breath frequently much resembles that of chloroform, and is often strong enough to render a naturally offensive breath pleasant for a time.

Emotional states and excitations exert considerable power over a person's odor. Elation, depression, sexual desire, jealousy, and the like will in many cases notably alter or augment body scent. Monin, in his "Sur les Odeurs du Corps Humain," cites a young man who had been badly disappointed in love and became inordinately jealous, whereupon his whole body gave off a disgustingly fetid odor. Orteschi refers to a young lady who emitted a distinct smell of vanilla from the spaces between the bases of her fingers.

Closely allied to this is the perversion of body odors frequently accompanying nervous disorders. It has long been noted that insane persons ordinarily give off a characteristic smell which some assert to be like that of yellow deer or mice; indeed, so distinctive and pronounced is this odor that certain specialists have declared that without it, all other dependable symptoms failing, they would be at a loss whether to declare a patient's suspected insanity feigned or real. Mitchell has noted that where there are nervous lesions that area of the skin served by those nerves many times exhales the smell of stagnant water. And there was a young woman given to hysteria who during her spells would give off a scent of violets so pronounced as to fill the room she was in; and what was more remarkable was that it was emitted from the left half of her chest only. A violet odor was also diffused by a man subject to hypochondria. A young woman afflicted with St. Vitus' dance is mentioned by Hammond as smelling like pineapples, and he speaks of another who when suffering from severe sick headache gave off an odor like that of Limburger cheese. Persons stricken with lethargy or catalepsy not uncommonly exhale a smell like that of dead bodies.

Not only nervous ills, but also body diseases and disorders may be productive of their distinguishing scents. Certain physicians have asserted that they could detect the presence of syphilis in a patient by his smell, and many experienced nurses have declared that they can tell whether or no a person has cancer by the odor he diffuses before ever his biopsies come back from the laboratory. Rayer reports a woman patient of his who was afflicted with chronic peritonitis who for some time before her death exhaled a strong odor of musk which grew fainter as she approached death and had just about disappeared at the time she died. It is often thought that the well-known "hospital odor" of those institutions is a composite of not only the many medicaments there employed, but also of the multitude of odors characteristic of one or another of the numerous diseases being treated there. In general, the wards devoted to women and children have a predominantly butyric acid-like odor, whilst those for men are marked by more alkaline scents, such as that of ammonia. But more particularly, individual disorders have their distinctive smells. It has been asserted that sufferers from the plague in the old days when it was epidemic gave off an odor of honey. The sweats of dysentery patients have been noted to smell like excrement and to be discernible at some distance. Some of the other more striking disease scents are: typhus, a mouse-like odor; typhoid, one resembling blood; scarlatina, the fragrance of hot bread; measles, reminiscent of recently pluckd feathers; eczema and impetigo, a moldy smell, etc.

Finally, things taken into the system, as food, drink, or medicines, may profoundly influence body odor. Condiments and spices are particularly powerful in this effect, and an excess of butter or other fats in the diet will impart an oily smell to the person. In fluids, alcohol and

coffee hold leading places. Among medicaments, copaiba, cubebs, and sandalwood show marked effects on body odor. There was a case of a young woman who was taking Fowler's solution who became subject to periodic sweats of such offensiveness that she was forced to discontinue the agent, whereupon the odor disappeared.

As has been mentioned, one of the major contributing factors to body odor is perspiration, and with the possible exception of the direct genital odor, this seems to be the element with about the strongest general sex-stimulating effect. Prof. Most tells of a highly sexed young peasant man who boasted to him of having easily seduced many a previously chaste girl through the simple expedient of carrying his handkerchief in his armpit for a time while dancing with her and then wiping the perspiration from her face with it as occasion arose, the odor of his own perspiration in the handkerchief thus so exciting the young lady sexually as to greatly facilitate his designs.

An historic case of the erotic power of perspiration is that of Henry III, King of Navarre. It is said that at the feast celebrating his betrothal to Margaret de Valois (of "Heptameron" fame) he accidentally wiped his face with a garment belonging to Maria of Cleves, which was still moist with her perspiration, and though she was married to the Prince de Conde there was at once born in Henry as a consequence such irresistible passion for her that her subsequent life was rendered most unhappy by his actions. A similar occurrence is told of Henry IV whose intense infatuation for the lovely Gabrielle is said to have had its origin at a ball when he mopped his brow with her handkerchief.

So widely established has been this power of the odor of perspiration that there may be found many customs of primitive peoples based upon it. Ploss describes such a practice adhered to by engaged couples among the natives of the Philippine Islands: when for any reason the engaged persons are forced to separate for a time, as a safeguard of mutual fidelity they exchange articles of the clothing they have been wearing and these are carefully preserved by each and frequently kissed and smelled.

The smell of the hair and scalp has already been listed as one of the fundamental factors in body odor, and a few more details on it may not be amiss. It must be remembered that what is referred to here is the distinctive odor more or less inherent in these body attributes and not the stench arising from neglect and uncleanliness of them. To a large extent this hair odor may be racial, as for example with the Chinese whose hair will exhale a strong scent of musk even after having just been washed with powerful detergents. It is often thought that much of the characteristic odor of women takes its origin in the masses of hair adorning most of them. Sexual excitement and emotional tension may frequently heighten this smell, and various diseases and disorders may alter it. It has been noted that in the fits of hystero-epilepsy the hair will at times take on the odor of ozone, and that tinea favosa (a ringworm of the scalp) imparts to the head a smell like that of cat's urine. The odor of hair is greatly altered by death, and most of it is lost from hair that fall out—indeed, experienced wig-makers assert that they can tell whether certain hair they are using was cut from a living head or obtained from combings.

In addition to its intrinsic smell, hair, not only of the scalp but of the pubis and armpits as well and wherever else present on the body of certain individuals, functions importantly in compiling body odor by acting as an accumulator of various odoriferous body products (as perspiration, skin exudations, and many secretions peculiar to the locality at which it is situated) and then radiating them more effectively by means of its great exposed surface. In fact, there are authorities who believe that collecting and heightening sex-stimulating odors was the chief purpose of Nature in giving us hair.

As has been said, in general it is the woman who has the more per-

sonal and directly erotogenic smell, whereas that of man is frequently less direct and is based more on associated than personal odors. The typical female scent is sometimes given the technical term of odor foeminoe and has the power of driving certain susceptible males to near-frenzy. Wealthy old men, and some not quite so old, have paid handsomely simply for the privilege of sniffing around on fresh young girls. Solomon's "Song of Songs" in the Bible is much concerned with extolling this odor of the female, and in that great delineator of the realities of physical love, Emile Zola, we encounter such reference as: "Everything exhaled an odor of woman;" "He smelled this woman's shoulders, the fragrance of which intoxicated him," etc. Poets and authors throughout the ages have sung the praises of woman's exciting scent. No least proof of the sexual power of the feminine odor is the fact that to practically all male homosexuals it is either distasteful or downright repulsive. It is not a uniform quality throughout life, but undergoes change from time to time. Some authorities divide these changes into three main periods or phases (after the sexless odor of normal childhood, of course): the period of puberty or sexual ripening; the period of marriage or sexual function; and the period of the menopause or sexual decay, or of old age. It is generally agreed that for the majority of normal males the first is the most keenly excitant, and the last the least so.

There are smells other than those originating from the body that exert an erotic influence, and of prime importance among these is the fragrance of certain flowers. One of the most prominent of the ancient Roman orgiastic festivals was the Floralia in which large quantities of flowers played a dominant part and served as a sexual stimulant. Mantegazza has advanced as evidence of this connection the similarity between facial expressions noted when inhaling the perfume of flowers and that when undergoing sexual pleasure. He observes that when a woman smells the flowers she loves best she will many times close her eyes, breathe deeply, and perhaps even tremble slightly, giving a general picture reminiscent of that she presents when with her lover. He quotes a certain lady as saying: "I sometimes feel such pleasure in smelling flowers that I seem to be committing a sin." Women seem to be more susceptible than men to sexual stimulation by the fragrance of flowers, and for some reason it appears that in the main it is the white flowers with heavy, penetrating scents that are most effective on this score, as in particular the gardenia, tuberose, lilies of the valley, frangipani flowers, and, by some strange paradox, the commonly accepted floral symbol of cold chastity, the lily. The pleasant perfumes of such widely admired flowers as the rose, violet, etc., appear to arouse no especial erotic reaction with the majority of women, though many confess that with the others they are excited to such a degree as to bring about a moistening of the vulvar region.

Though there are flowers which undoubtedly possess an aphrodisiac power in their own right, there are others which apparently operate through the more or less close resemblance of their fragrance to certain animal or sexual odors. A garden weed, the *Chenopodium vulvaria,* commonly known as the stinking goosefoot, exhales an odor like that of putrid fish which is suggestive of the female genitalia. Others of this same general nature are the Herb Robert and the Stinking St. John's worts (the *Geranium robertianum* and the *Hypericum hircinum*). Other plants give off a smell like that of semen, and the most noteworthy of these is probably the white-flowered Lawsonia, or *Lawsonia inermis,* ordinarily known simply as the henna plant. The flowers of this plant are held in great esteem by Mohammedan peoples, who take their sex quite seriously, and are employed by them for many purposes, as tinting their nails, hair, and other portions of the body, adorning their houses or persons, etc. That curious and observant old traveler, Sonnini, has to say on this head: "It is very remarkable that the perfume of the henna

flowers, when closely inhaled, is almost entirely lost in a very decided spermatic odor. If the flowers are crushed between the fingers this odor prevails, and is, indeed, the only one perceptible. It is not surprising that so delicious a flower has furnished Oriental poetry with many charming traits and amorous similes." Others have remarked upon the semen-like scent of the pollen of flowering grasses, and in this connection it may be well to quote what a female correspondent of Havelock Ellis has to say on the matter, not only in respect to these grasses but also for an interesting suggestion as to why plant smells may be erotogenic: "It seems very natural that flowers, etc., should have an exciting effect, as the original and by far the pleasantest way of love-making was in the open among flowers and fields; but a more purely physical reason may, I think, be found in the exact resemblance between the scent of semen and that of the pollen of flowering grasses. The first time I became aware of this resemblance it came on me with a rush that here was the explanation of the very exciting effect of a field of flowering grasses and, perhaps through them, of the scents of other flowers. If I am right, I suppose flower scents should affect women more powerfully than men in a sexual way. I do not think anyone would be likely to notice the odor of semen in this connection unless they had been greatly struck by the exciting effects of the pollen of grasses. I had often noticed it and puzzled over it." Havelock Ellis speculates from this that since pollen is the male sexual element of plants, this effect may be an evidence of a particular kind of unity running through the organic world. It is also possible to explain it more simply by the irritating effect pollens frequently exert on the nasal membranes, and the rather close relationship between the nasal and sexual organs, both physiologically and psychologically, has already been pointed out.

There are too many non-human odors capable, under certain circumstances and with certain individuals, of wielding an erotic power to consider them all here, but before leaving this subject we ought to consider briefly one further outstanding scent of this sort: that of leather. This differs from most smells in that it seems it may be about equally effective with either men or women. This may be due to the fact that this is an odor which appears to lie about halfway between the natural body odors and the artificial scents or perfumes; though leather is sometimes employed as a base in perfumery. Fundamentally, leather is an animal product, but its preparation and curing so alters its scent as to throw it toward the artificial side, which may help account for its middle position in the field of smells.

Some authorities feel fairly certain that the smell of leather is one of the most important elements in shoe fetishism, a condition of certain individuals in which they can be sexually aroused only when in visual or physical contact with shoes. Some shoe fetishists have declared outrightly that it is the scent of the leather that most moves them about shoes. There was a prostitute who had several patrons who insisted on the distinctive odor of new shoes in the room, and in order to satisfy them she resorted to the device of holding her shoes over a spirit lamp for a short time.

However, leather frequently has much olfactory erotic power in its own right, apart from any connection with footwear. Many women have been particularly addicted to the smell of old leather-bound books, and some have haunted old bookshops for no other reason than to revel in the scents abounding there. Certain of these women have declared that they find the fragrance of leather stimulating because it is suggestive of the odor of the sexual organs, and since leather is an altered animal substance there may be some truth in the contention, particularly for those with an especially attuned olfactory sense. Naturally, conditioning and association may also be a factor with the scent of leather as with other smells.

SMELL FETISHISM

The term *fetishism* is a generic designation for a broad type of sexual perversion in which the person afflicted with it is partially or completely impotent, or may even be totally cold and indifferent to sex, except in the presence of a certain article, substance, or environmental factor (which is his individual "fetish"). It may be some article of clothing, as a silk stocking or (as we have just seen) a shoe; it may be a material or substance, as fur, linen, sand, grassy ground, etc.; or it may be some immaterial element, as light, darkness, music, or, of course, certain odors. When a person is sexually aroused or capable of the sex act only in the presence of a certain odor or type of odor, he is said to suffer from "smell fetishism." This does not mean that certain smells will lead him to overt sex acts, though in many cases it may. There are some persons whose libido has become so completely perverted that the act of smelling their fetish odor and the gratification obtained from it has come entirely to replace the sex act and its gratification. However, such complete smell fetishists seem to be in the minority, and in most instances the fetishism is to a greater or lesser degree only contributory to the excitation toward and the power to complete the sex act physically.

Smell fetishism, or olfactory fetishism, is not in its broader manifestations especially unusual. Just where the normal reaction to the erotic stimulation of smell ends and fetishism begins is a most difficult point to determine. It is probable that at present no better criterion can be set than this: that where there is no actual replacement of sexual response by olfaction, and where the part played by smell in sexual stimulation does not pass the always-tenuous bounds of "normality," there is no smell fetishism.

A common object of male smell fetishists is some item of feminine apparel that has been in contact with the woman's body sufficiently long to take on some of the woman's scent. As a rule, under-garments—slips, corsets, girdles, panties, etc.—which have been in direct contact with the body, often near the genital region, are most favored. The exchange that frequently takes place between lovers of intimate articles of clothing undoubtedly has its basis in smell fetishism. The fact that handkerchiefs are many times exchanged may be entered in objection as they seem hardly an "intimate" item of clothing, but when it is recalled how they are usually carried — in a trousers-pocket near the genitals by a man and in the bodice between the breasts or up a sleeve by a woman—it will be seen that they have ample opportunity to pick up body odor. It is more than likely that the "favors" given during the Middle Ages by ladies to their knights (a handkerchief, a ribbon, or some other article that had been on their person) as a token of remembrance and appreciation and as an inspiration to valorous deeds, really functioned more effectively through smell fetishism. When going away on a journey men not infrequently take along a piece of clothing from their wife or sweetheart to give them vicarious solace while out of reach of physical gratification. An outstanding instance of this was the famous poet Goethe who admitted that one time when he had to leave Weimar for two days on an official journey he took along a bodice that had been worn by Frau von Stein so as to have with him the scent of her body.

The vicarious gratification of the sex instinct through smell may in itself become perverted and instead of following from the odor of the

genitals or body may require for its stimulation the smell of the bodily excretions, in particular the feces or urine. This type of fetishism may be particularized in which the pervert is aroused only by the smell of the excretions of his beloved, or it may be general in which the odors of the feces and urine of anyone and everyone will serve to effect erotic gratification.

PERFUMES

It is impossible to find any period of recorded history in which the arts of making and using perfumes were not given careful and serious study. The ancients employed them freely as general adjuncts to pleasant living (in a time when sanitation, sewerage, and personal hygiene were not too perfected), as therapeutic or preventive agents for many disease conditions, and of course as erotic stimulants. In modern times this first usage remains, the second has practically disappeared, and the third has gone pretty much underground where without open acknowledgment it is practiced with about as much assiduity as ever but frequently with much less skill and understanding than in antiquity.

Some of the most ancient Egyptian papyri extant contain references to the use of perfumes. Mention has already been made of the prominence given to scents in the Bible's highly erotic "Song of Songs," but the rest of the Bible is also shot through with allusions to the employment of perfumes for sexual purposes. Wherever a bride is being prepared her scenting takes top importance. When Ruth is on the make for Boaz she takes care first to anoint herself with fragrant oils. When Judith was getting ready to captivate Holofernes, "She washed herself all over with water and anointed herself with precious ointment." And when Esther won the contest for who would be the next queen of King Ahasuerus it was only after she, along with the great number of other maiden contestants, had been carefully processed and purified for a full year (six months with oil of myrrh and six months with sweet odors and with other things for the purifying of women), as the king would not even allow them in his august presence without this indispensable preparation. Mohammed, who while keeping the eyes of his soul steadfastly fixed on Heaven denied his earthy body none of the pleasures of its temporary habitat, often observed to the faithful that, "What I best love in your world are women and perfumes," and in the same connection he admonished them that, "Nothing, nothing is better nor more salutary than perfumes after copulation."

Perfumes have two fundamental purposes: to hide and to augment natural body odor. In our present-day civilization, in which we have almost made a fine art of persistently taking a wrong or artificial attitude toward all things natural, our effete culture has decreed that a body odor of any sort is animal-like and is therefore unworthy of humankind. As a consequence, most women today desperately douse themselves with a great variety of odorous (and high-priced) preparations in an idiotic attempt to make themselves smell like most anything—a pine forest, a rose garden, a violet bed, sea spray, etc.—in the world but what they are: a woman. The ancients, and such primitive peoples as have reached the stage of perfumery, are not so foolish—they employed perfumes and odorous agents to heighten, add to, or more attractively set off the natural body and sexual odors. It is odd that most women of today go to great lengths and much trouble to enhance and better display their anatomical sexual features (as pointing up their buttocks and breasts by means of foundation garments and brassieres, etc.), while one of their most direct and potent sexual allurements, their natural personal odor, they not only neglect to give what artificial aid they may, but

strive endlessly to do away with or disguise. Our fine ladies who disdainfully turn up their noses at the "uncouth, ignorant savages" might be taken down a peg and taught a lesson if they had seen the Polynesian who, on a visit to Sydney in Australia, turned away in utter disgust from elegant ladies of that city with the remark: "They have no smell!"

Another contribution of dubious value that modern times has made to the art of perfumery is the delicate, subtle, composite perfume of entirely characterless odor. In former times women rarely employed any but the strong, simple odorous agents of definite sexual significance. Almost invariably the favorites were animal products and in most cases were obtained from the genital glands of the animal. Probably the four most widely used around the world were: musk, castoreum, civet, and ambergris. The modern practice of blending perfumes of a number of agents to get a composite scent that resembles none of the ingredients, formerly found little or no favor; the various primary agents were generally used directly. Further, our present-day custom of choosing a single one of these blended perfumes and then employing it indiscriminately at various places on the body for *all* personal scenting purposes, would have been regarded with horror by the women of olden times. They were by no means blind to the possibilities of getting better effects by the blending of several of the fundamental odors, but they would not have tolerated having this blending done for them in mass production in the kettles of a perfume manufactory, so that they would smell exactly like the thousands of other women who had been led to purchase the same brand, probably through the cute bottle it was packed in or the catchy advertising that had impressed the brand-name on their mind rather than the suitability of the scent to their individual person. When blending of odors was desired, ancient women carried it out on their own body, applying one basic odorous agent to their genital region, another to their breasts, another to the back of their neck, and so on, each scent being so chosen as to enhance the natural odor of the part to which it was applied and not antagonistic toward it, so that as a result the woman exhaled an indefinable but seductive fragrance in which all the elements of her natural odor had been carefully augmented so as to produce a more pronounced and possibly somewhat improved general body odor which still remained much her own and amply distinctive to set her off from other women. The ancient Greek writer Lucian makes reference to this refinement of perfuming when he describes that portion of the old Athenian ladies' toilet: "Egyptian essences for the hands and feet, Phoenician perfumes for the cheeks and bosom, marjoram for the hair, and the spirit of wild thyme for the thighs."

It goes without saying that since the proper perfumes and scents may be effectively employed to heighten a woman's natural attractive odors, they may also be put into service by those women who for one reason or another are lacking or deficient in any of the natural personal odors that enter into the sexual stimulation of the male. It is more than likely that many a wall-flower would soon be transformed into a rambling rose if only she exercised a little care to take on the proper fragrance.

It may be enlightening briefly to sketch the history of the erotic employment of perfumes. As has already been indicated, there is every reason to believe (through the evidence of ancient papyri and far more ancient rock inscriptions) that the art of perfumery, and rather a complex and polished art at that, was flourishing in Egypt as far back as we have any trace of the country's history, and in all probability even farther back. From the earliest times of which we have any record, the Egyptians had special perfumes for the hair, mouth, genital parts, and other portions of the body. They made great use of the white henna flower, as did the early Hebrews after them who got not only the henna

from them but most of what they knew of the art of perfumery as well. The main odorous ingredients utilized by the ancient Hebrews were, in addition to henna, myrrh, cinnamon, cassia, and calamis, and that they were most freely employed in erotic connections is amply borne out, as has already been indicated, by many passages in the Old Testament.

Along with many other elements of their culture, the ancient Greeks obtained from the Egyptians the fundamentals of erotic perfumes, and naturally the Romans later took it over from the Greeks, just as they adopted practically everything Grecian of value. So great and economically important did the traffic in perfumes become in ancient Rome that Julius Caesar and Licinius Crassus, consuls at the time, forbade the sale of foreign perfumes in the country. Most noteworthy was the invariably close connection of perfume with all aspects of love. Indeed, the great majority of the makers and merchants of perfumes were in some fashion affiliated with prostitution, as procurers, brothel-keepers, courtesans, and the like, and for some strange reason the more prized and sought after a perfume might be, the more scorned and looked down upon was the person who made or dispensed it, as if anyone acquainted with such subtleties of so erotic an art as perfumery must be equally facile in the more unusual refinements of love. When a "respectable" Roman entered the place of business of any of these perfumers it was as a rule only with his face masked. So despised did these dealers in the avidly sought after articles become that eventually the term *unguentaria* (dealers in unguents or perfume) came to be about equivalent to whore or procuress, and the more elegant of the wealthy Romans simply could not tolerate any contact with them but maintained their private perfumers instead.

When the grandeur that was Rome began to peter out a bit, perfumery as a fine art went into something of a decline, as did most of the other cultural niceties during medieval times. The Crusades served to bring Western Europeans of the latter part of the Middle Ages into contact with the arts and practices of the Arabian people, and before long this brought about a renewed interest in and knowledge of perfumery and the knights' ladies were soon busily employing scents for erotic purposes, as the literature of the times testifies.

The Renaissance, which adopted and elaborated all the cultural refinements of classical antiquity, certainly did not ignore the possibilities of erotic perfumery. Indeed, in many respects it developed and refined it more highly than did the Greeks and Romans, a thing made possible by the discovery of new aromatic substances in the New World and improved technological processes, and spurred on by the intense interest in all things sexual for which the period was known. Some of the most penetrating works on the subject were compiled by Renaissance Italian experts and are often consulted to this day. Renaissance Italy was a hot-bed of sexuality, and perfumes were intimately associated with all phases of it.

From Italy of this time the science of sensual perfumery moved to France. Catherine de Medici was a leading figure in this transplanting and she imported a number of renowned Italian perfumers to France, and by the time Henry III came into power they were badly over-worked in supplying the demands of the pleasure-loving court. France came to be, which it still to a large extent is, the most perfumed nation of the Occident, and many were the refinements of scenting evolved and practiced by them, not least of which was the *pet parfume* (perfumed breaking of wind) so amusingly and vividly described by Verville. It is tragically amusing that perfumes which then came into wide popularity largely through their amatory provocative powers, received in this period a great additional impetus as a counteractive against the consequences of love: when in the 16th century syphilis broke all bounds in Europe and achieved epidemic proportions, people went about practically bathed in perfume as a desperate prophylactic measure against

infection, reasoning possibly that to be spared from the smell of the diseased was to be spared from the disease. Also, as personal cleanliness appears not to have become fashionable until well into the 16th century, it is probable that perfumes did much to make elegant gatherings of the quality folk somewhat more tolerable for all concerned. The elaborate use of perfumes most likely reached its height in the gilded, and extremely sex-indulgent, courts of Louis XIV and XV. An alternate name for the court of Versailles was *la cour parfumee,* and Madame de Pompadour's yearly perfume bill ran well over half a million livres. The famous Duc de Richelieu constantly had his person and living quarters generously sprinkled with perfumes (and Richelieu is still remembered for his libertine habits), while there were "clubs" of young dandies who instead of a password or grip had a certain scent by which the members recognized each other. Before the war Paris remained the perfume center of the world and its trade in scents brought it in well over 100,000,000 francs yearly.

Sensual perfumery reached England during the time of Queen Elizabeth. It seems that its importation there was primarily directly from Italy rather than by way of France, and it appears that one of the main persons to introduce it there was the Count of Oxford who on his return from a trip to Italy brought with him a number of perfumed gloves and other articles of clothing, scented pillows, and similar odorous novelties, and it was not long before fashionable folk simply would not be seen out without their elaborately wrought scent vials, perfume boxes, and the like. Nor were the staid English unaware of the erotogenic possibilities of odors, as evidenced by the fact that their Parliament found it necessary in 1770 to issue this decree: "Any woman of whatever age, position, or calling, virgin, wife, or widow, who shall hereafter ensnare into marriage any subject of the king, by the aid of perfumes, false hair, Spanish cosmetics, corsets, crinolines, high heels, or false hips, shall be liable to all punishments prescribed for witchcraft and similar practices, and the wedding shall be pronounced null and void."

The methods of employing perfumes for sexual purposes have had as long and checkered a history as the perfumes themselves. One of the most obvious utilizations of this sort is the direct scenting of the genitals, and this practice seems to have originated in ancient Egypt and to have been resorted to by both males and females. It is likely that in such a hot country perfumes served the double purpose of not only rendering the genitalia more alluring but also of covering up the naturally repulsive odor that might there be present. That famous old odorous compound made of a number of ingredients, called *kyphi,* was originally intended to scent the female genitals, and an ancient papyrus over 3,100 years old contains a formula for this and instructions to use it either by smoking or fumigation or as a pellet to be inserted into the female vulva.

The applying of perfumes to the genitals was carried to other countries along with the art of perfumery itself. The affected Renaissance naturally added refinements to this and in addition to scenting the pudenda the elegant people of that time carefully combed, curled, and trimmed the pubic hair, a work to which the gallant young dandies gave especial attention. Genital fragrance also became an item in the *ars amandi* of France, and Madame du Barry made no bones about attributing her hold on Louis XV to her practice of regularly douching herself with amber. Many young ladies of our day take pains to lay seductive sachets among their panties in the dresser-drawer, and various powders are openly on sale in the five-and-ten for counteracting the offensive sexual odors during menstruation.

Almost equally important in erotic perfuming is the mouth as the breath may have just as repellent an effect upon a budding lover as ill-smelling genitals and is usually sooner brought under his notice in

the early stages of courtship. So true is this that ancient Greeks who were suspicious of their wives' fidelity would make them eat onions before they left them alone. Consequently, scenting the breath has been an objective of the perfumers for almost as long as have the genitals. The collection of ancient Egyptian documents known as the Ebers papyri contains recipes for substances to be smoked or taken as pastilles for making the breath agreeable. The old Greek and Roman medical writers give a number of formulae for such compounds, as do the old Arabic and Turkish erotological treatises, while the literature of the Renaissance abounds in measures for oral scenting. Today billboards, placards, and magazine ads thunder warnings to all and sundry as to what might be the dire fate of their love life if they are so careless as to "offend" with the breath.

Along with these two, axillary scenting forms the ageless trilogy of fundamental objectives of sexual perfuming. The ancients resorted to rubbing various spices and bruised herbs under the arms to counteract offensive odors, the people of the 16th century seemed to favor a concoction of pulverized myrtle leaves in a solution of alum or lead acetate, while the eager young lady of the present-day is limited in her choice of under-arm deodorants only by the size of the stock in her local drug store.

Through the centuries methods and materia alter somewhat, sometimes people are a little more open in what they are trying and sometimes a bit more covert, and in this or that age a little more intelligence is brought to bear upon the problem, but today as in the earliest recorded time most persons know, either consciously or instinctively, that the attraction of the opposite sex is a work with three major aspects, the first two of which are quite generally recognized but the last is not usually realized or openly acknowledged, though every bit as important: to look one's best, to act one's best, and to smell one's best.